

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 157917

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DRAFTED BY SCA/SCS/LHFORT:LS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 157917

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC(GOULD, FRANK)

SUBJECT: W/W FRANK GOULD

REF: CEBU 0046

' 1. DEPT APPRECIATES MANILA AND CEBU EFFORTS TO LOCATE GOULD, AND AGREES WITH IMPLICIT CONCLUSION THE HE IS PROBABLY DEAD. WOULD LIKE TO BE AS CANDID AS POSSIBLE WITH GOULD FAMILY AND WITH CONGRESSIONAL INTERESTS, WHO HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING CASE WITH CONSIDERABLE INTEREST, BY FOLLOWING PROPOSED LETTER: BEGIN QUOTE:

DESPITE EXTENSIVE REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION, AMERICAN CONSULATE AT CEBU AND OUR EMBASSY IN MANILA, HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ASCERTAIN LITTLE BEYOND VAGUE RUMORS ABOUT MR. GOULD'S WHEREABOUTS SINCE HE WAS LAST SEEN IN DAVAO IN LATE SEPTEMBER, 1974. IN A RECENT DISCUSSION WITH AN OFFICER OF THE CONSULATE, A SENIOR PHILIPPINE MILITARY OFFICER RECENTLY REASSIGNED FROM THE COTOBATO AREA OF MINDANAO WHERE MR. GOULD WAS RUMORED TO HAVE BEEN AT ONE TIME, STATED HE HAD NOT HEARD OF NOR MET GOULD IN THAT REGION. HE ADDED THAT OCCASIONALLY FOREIGN JOURNALISTS VISITING COTOBATO DID NOT SEEK GOVERNMENT PROTECTION, IN WHICH CASE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 157917

THEY TRAVELLED AT THEIR OWN RISK.

THE COMMANDER OF THE MILITARY REGION COVERING THE MOST DISTURBED AREA OF CENTRAL MINDANAO HAS INFORMED THE CONSULATE IN CEBU THAT MR. GOULD HAD BEEN IN TAWI-TAWI AND ZAMBOANGA IN AUGUST, 1974 BEFORE TRAVELING ON TO COTOBATO AND DAVAO. HE HAD NO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

THE CONSULATE BELIEVES THAT THE LIMITED INFORMATION WHICH HAS BEEN OBTAINED REFLECTS THE FACT THAT THE CIVIL AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES IN THE DISTURBED AREAS GENUINELY DO NOT KNOW MR. GOULD'S WHEREABOUTS. CONSIDERING THE EFFORTS WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE AND THE LACK OF ANY ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENTS, IT CONCLUDES THAT IT IS NOT BEYOND THE REALM OF POSSIBILITY THAT MR. GOULD MAY BE DEAD. INTENSIVE EFFORTS TO DEVELOP FURTHER INFORMATION WILL CONTINUE, BUT THE CONSULATE IS INCREASINGLY CONVINCED THAT IF ANYONE KNOWS WHAT HAS HAPPENED, THE FACTS ARE NOT LIKELY TO BE FORTHCOMING THROUGH THE NORMAL CHANNELS OF INVESTIGATION. END QUOTE.

2. ASSUME MANILA WILL CONSULT WITH CEBU ON THIS PROPOSAL IN MANNER WHICH WILL PUT LEAST STRAIN ON CONSULATE'S COMMUNICATION FACILITIES. SISCO

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